

A STUDY OF DIRECT PLANNED LISTENING INSTRUCTION
IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES IN POLK
COUNTY IN THE STATE OF IOWA

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Jo Ann DeMoss
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is becoming more and more evident that listening comprehension is a neglected skill in the Language Arts programs of American schools. Educators are beginning to notice that the development of listening comprehension skills can affect the level of academic success.

I. THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to survey present practices in the teaching of listening skills in the intermediate grades in the nine school districts in Polk County, Iowa, and to compare the results with those found to be true by Stewart Van Wingerden in King, Snohomish, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties in the state of Washington. It has been determined by Van Wingerden that most intermediate grade teachers do not teach listening skills in a direct, planned manner. The author will use data gathered from the school districts of Ankeny Community, Bondurant-Farrar Community, Des Moines Independent Community, Johnston Community, North Polk Community, Saydel Consolidated, Southeast Polk Community, Urbandale Community and West Des Moines Community located in Polk County, Iowa to determine whether or not listening skills are taught in a direct, planned manner in Polk County, Iowa.

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II. JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

Research indicates that people listen almost three times as much as they read and yet James I. Brown reports in 1950 there were 2,800 experimental studies in the field of reading and only a handful in the field of listening. In view of this information he suggested educators seemed to be 8,400 studies behind time in the field of listening.¹

Rankin, who conducted an early study of listening in 1928, discovered that 70 per cent of the waking time of the sixty eight adults surveyed was spent in verbal communication. Of the verbal communication time, the adults spent an average of 9 per cent in writing, 16 per cent in reading, 30 per cent in talking, and 45 per cent in listening.²

Bird found similar results to those discovered earlier by Rankin. The study included the record of communication time, and how it was spent by high school students. The results were: writing, 13 per cent, reading, 16 per cent, talking 23 per cent, and listening, 48 per cent.³

Children also spend a great deal of time listening.

¹Brown, "The Measurement of Listening Ability," School and Society, LXXI (February 4, 1950), 69.

²Ralph G. Nichols and Leonard A. Stevens, Are You Listening? (New York: McGraw-Hill Company, Inc., 1957), p. 6.

³Donald E. Bird, "Listening," NEA Journal, XXXIX (November, 1960), 31.

Stephen Corey discovered that the chances were about one to sixty of a particular student's speaking compared to the possibility of the teacher's speaking and, presumably, the pupil's listening. Chances were two to one that teachers rather than pupils would be talking.¹

A study concerning teaching of listening in elementary schools in forty two states by Miriam E. Wilt in 1949 showed that teachers were unaware of both the amount of time they were expecting their pupils to learn by listening and the amount of time the children were actually listening.² Actual timed observations obtained by visiting nineteen elementary classrooms showed that teachers were expecting the children to listen 158 minutes per day, whereas they had estimated that they expected children to listen only 74.3 minutes per day. Wilt also declares, "There is substantial evidence from the nineteen classroom visits that the majority of elementary teachers do not consciously teach listening as a fundamental skill of communication."³

In the summer session of 1968 at Drake University, in

¹Corey, "The Teachers Out-talk the Pupils," The School Review, XLVIII (December, 1940), 752.

²Miriam E. Wilt, "A Study of Teacher Awareness of Listening as a Factor in Elementary Education," Journal of Educational Research, XLIII (April, 1950), 633.

³Ibid., p. 634.

Des Moines, Iowa, Dr. R. Nichols conducted a three day workshop on the subject of listening. Of the 3,655 day students, 93 were enrolled for this course. It is possible that had the course been listed with the education classes, rather than speech classes, even more people would have enrolled in it. These figures, however, do show the interest and desire of people to know more about listening.

Listening, then, is a skill that is of utmost importance. The author believes administrators and teachers should be aware of present practices in teaching listening skills.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Listening. Throughout the report of this investigation, the term "listening" has been interpreted as the act of acquiring the speaker's meaning by identification and interpretation of spoken symbols. The term "auding" has been used by D. P. Brown¹ in referring to the process of getting meaning from spoken symbols, but for this study it was felt that "listening" was more appropriate in making comparisons with reading, writing, and speaking.

Listening skills. Eleven authorities in James I.

¹Don Brown, "Teaching Aural English," English Journal, XXXIX (March, 1950), 128.

Brown's study agreed upon five of the most important facets of listening.¹ "Listening skills" referred to in this study were limited to those five facets. They are, the ability to: (1) synthesize the component parts of a speech to discover the central idea or ideas; (2) distinguish between relevant and irrelevant materials; (3) make logical inferences from what was heard; (4) make full use of contextual clues; and, (5) follow without loss a fairly complex thought unit.

Methods of teaching listening. The three methods of teaching listening were defined as Stewart Van Wingerden used them in his doctoral study.² He defined them arbitrarily for his study in terms familiar to most elementary school teachers. "Incidental" teaching of listening referred to indirect and unplanned teaching of listening which takes place during a time when the teaching of listening is not the principal objective. The second method, "teaching of listening as a part of reading instruction," pertained to the integration of teaching reading and listening where the two skills overlap but where, most often the

¹James I. Brown, op. cit., p. 71.

²Stewart Van Wingerden, "A Study of Direct, Planned Listening Instruction In The Intermediate Grades In Four Counties In The State Of Washington" (unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington, 1965), p. 14.

teaching of reading is the primary goal. "Direct, planned instruction of listening skills" referred to the execution of planned lessons in which the teaching of specific listening skills is the principal objective.

IV. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Listening comprises nearly one-half of all communication time, but this has not made good listeners. Most people remember only twenty five per cent of what they hear.¹ A summary of the work done on the improvement of listening will follow.

LEARNED LISTENING BEHAVIOR

More and more educators have become concerned with the problem of children not listening to each other, and not being able to listen to and follow directions.

James I. Brown reported in 1950 that there was tentative evidence that listening was a more efficient medium for learning than reading, until about the seventh grade.² Dechant states that until about the fifth grade, children learn more, and remember better, through listening than

¹Walter W. Stevens, "How Well Do You Listen?" Adult Education, XII (Autumn, 1962), 42.

²James I. Brown, op. cit., p. 70.

reading.¹ A comparison of the scores of 172 intermediate grade children in western Pennsylvania on intelligence tests, arithmetic computation tests, reading tests, and listening tests was made by Cleland and Toussaint. They found that reading achievement scores correlated most closely with the standardized listening test scores. The conclusion they made was that listening skills may be a determinate in growth in reading, and suggested, "that greater emphasis be placed on the teaching of listening, especially at the intermediate grade level."²

Nichols stated writers seem to agree on the following four ideas: (1) most people are poor listeners; (2) with training they could easily improve; (3) schools should provide training; and, (4) to operate at high level they must learn to be dynamic, responsive, constructive, and courteous; and that the attainment of these attributes will be richly rewarded.³

The reason behind the fact that most schools have no formal methods of teaching listening, Nichols and Stevens

¹Emerald V. Dechant, Improving the Teaching of Reading (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1964), p. 96.

²D. L. Cleland and I. H. Toussaint, "Interrelationships of Reading, Listening, Arithmetic Computation, and Intelligence," Reading Teacher, (January, 1962), pp. 229-30.

³Ralph G. Nichols, "Ten Components of Effective Listening," Education, LXXV (January, 1955), 292.

believe, is due to four false assumptions.¹

1. "Bright" people listen well and "dull" ones listen poorly.
2. Listening ability is closely related to hearing acuity.
3. Since people get much practice in listening the skill does not need to be taught.
4. Learning to read will automatically teach one to listen..

Implications given by some studies indicate that there are some factors which cause one person to be a better listener than another, but credit for greater skill in listening cannot be attributed to general maturation, heredity, or incidental learning. Caffrey found little relationship between chronological age and listening ability among secondary students.² The best listeners in a large group of college students, studied by Nichols, were ones who came from farm families but who did not necessarily score high on intelligence tests.³ Both Caffrey and Irvin⁴ in attempting

¹Nichols and Stevens, op. cit., 11-14.

²John G. Caffrey, "Auding Ability At The Secondary Level," Education, LXXV (January, 1955), 306.

³Nichols and Stevens, loc. cit.

⁴Charles E. Irvin, "Evaluating a Training Program in Listening for College Freshmen," School Review, LXI (January, 1953), 29.

to isolate factors affecting listening ability at the college level, discovered evidence that males are superior listeners.

Nichols pointed out that skillful listening is a complex act because of at least four factors: (1) listening generally requires greater concentration than does reading, since it frequently can not be re-done as reading can be re-read; (2) listening requires both the slow and fast listener to adjust to the speaker's rate of presentation; (3) listening does not allow time out for checking an unfamiliar word in the dictionary; and, (4) listening contains sequences of words and ideas which have not been as carefully organized as they would have been had they been presented in printed form.¹

James I. Brown also points out that a listener under direct influence of a powerful personality is more open to emotional appeals than a reader would be in reading the same information.²

TEACHING LISTENING

There is experimental evidence that listening skills can be improved. At the University of Minnesota students in

¹Nichols and Stevens, loc. cit.

²James I. Brown, "Why Not Teach Listening?" School and Society, LXIX (February, 1949), pp. 115-16.

the freshman class are tested each year to determine their listening ability. Students having the lowest 20 per cent of the scores are given a twelve-week course in listening. At the end of the twelve weeks the entire freshman class is again tested for listening achievement. In most all of the classes it has been found that the low scorers on the first test had improved their listening achievement to the same level as, or higher, than the students who had not been required to take the training.¹

Irvin conducted an experiment to discover, among other problems, whether or not a difference would exist after one group had had listening instruction.² College freshmen were divided into two sections meeting in the morning and two sections meeting in the afternoon. All of these groups received listening instructions. The control group was divided in the same manner but received no listening instructions. Both groups were given a pre-test in listening by Ralph Nichols from the University of Minnesota. An analysis of covariance was used to weigh and adjust the difference because of pre-existing differences in listening achievement. A random selection of 500 from the 1,200 students was used. Because the difference in test score results were significant at the one per cent level, Irvin

¹Nichols and Stevens, op. cit., 15.

²Irvin, op. cit., pp. 25-29.

concluded that a sufficient number of the students involved in listening can be positively influenced by teaching to result in improvement in listening comprehension.

Working with 600 fifth graders on listening comprehension skills for twenty minutes a day during a period of six weeks, Hollow found that, "Listening skills were appreciably improved by a planned program of instruction."¹

Pratt experimented with forty classes of sixth-grade children in different school districts in Iowa and states contingent to Iowa to determine whether or not they could be taught how to listen more effectively. He concluded, "there seems to be little doubt that listening can be taught effectively in Grade VI."²

Trivette³ reported that 114 of 147 fifth grade students showed improvement after they had been given thirty daily lessons taken from the Gates-Pearson Practice Exercises in Silent Reading, Book VI, but used as listening exercises, which included the skills of listening for main ideas, details, and making inferences. The author was

¹Sister Mary K. Hollow, "Listening Comprehension at the Intermediate Grade Level," Elementary School Journal, LVI (December, 1955), 161.

²E. Pratt, "Experimental Evaluation of a Program for the Improvement of Listening," Elementary School Journal, LVI (March, 1956), pp. 315-20.

³Sue Trivette, "The Effect of Training in Listening for Specific Purposes," Journal of Educational Research, LIV (March, 1961), pp. 276-77.

unable to explain why six of the students in the experiment made no gain and twenty seven decreased in skill. She did find, as did Cleland and Toussaint, a correlation between reading skills and listening skills.

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Heilman concluded from his search for materials to use in the teaching of listening that there was a shortage in supply. Eleven out of fifteen educational psychology textbooks published between 1946 and 1954 that he examined did not even mention listening in the table of contents or the index. Because educational psychology books are used for teacher training programs one would assume by examining their contents listening was not important enough to mention. In surveying more than a dozen curriculum guidebooks, Heilman discovered two which failed to include anything on listening. Suggestions given in the others were vague.¹

Articles written by Blake,² Russell,³ Niles,⁴ and Pronovost⁵ do outline methods for listening instruction.

¹Arthur W. Heilman, "Listening and the Curriculum," Education, LXXV (January, 1955), pp. 285-86.

²Howard E. Blake, "A Code for Teachers of Listening," Elementary English, XXXIX (January, 1962), pp. 48-49.

³David H. Russell and Elizabeth F. Russell, Listening Aids Through The Grades (Columbia University, New York: Teachers College Press, 1959.)

⁴Olive S. Niles and Margaret J. Early, "Listening,"

EXTENT SKILLS ARE TAUGHT

Van Wingerden made a survey in 1965 to determine the amount of listening instruction that was taking place. Until that time no surveys had been reported concerning this topic since Wilt's study in 1949.¹ The survey by Van Wingerden was designed to determine how listening skills were taught, and what teachers taught when they taught "listening skills." The data were collected from three hundred teachers selected from the total 2,342 fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade teachers in four counties in the state of Washington. In summarizing the results of his study concerning the amount of direct, planned listening instruction that was provided Van Wingerden concluded that: (1) teachers said they spent much less time using the direct, planned approach than they did teaching listening as a part of the reading program or by the incidental approach, and the incidental approach was the most popular; (2) they said they taught the five skills used as a definition of listening skills in the study but they tended to do so in an incidental approach;

Journal of Education, CXXXVIII (December, 1955), pp. 41-55.

⁵Wilbert L. Pronovost, The Teaching of Speaking and Listening in the Elementary School (New York: Longmans Green, 1959).

¹Van Wingerden, op. cit., p. 10.

(3) very few of the teachers said they taught listening as a separate subject, grouped children for listening instruction, graded or tested them in listening, had taken a listening course, or felt that teaching aids were available to them in the quantity that they were available for other subject areas; and, (4) the teachers who said they spent much time using direct, planned instruction were most often the ones who made use of the practices and aids listed previously.¹

SUMMARY

The reviewed literature suggests that listening is important, and can be taught; but even so, many people listen ineffectively.

The current study was designed to determine to what extent direct, planned instruction in listening skills is taking place in the intermediate grade classrooms in Polk County public school districts in Iowa and to make comparisons with the results Van Wingerden found to be true in 1965 in four counties in the state of Washington.

V. LIMITATIONS

Several limitations must be kept in mind: (1) the data consisted of what teachers said they practiced, not

¹Van Wingerden, op. cit., p. 60.

what the researcher observed of classroom teaching; (2) the grade level and geographic area were limited; and, (3) the data were gathered near Christmas vacation, a very busy time for the teachers. It is possible their evaluations were not as carefully thought-out as they might otherwise have been.

VI. PROCEDURE USED

The source of data was a questionnaire sent to a sampling of 25 per cent of the 440 fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade teachers in the school districts of Ankeny Community, Bondurant-Farrar Community, Des Moines Independent Community, Johnston Community, North Polk Community, Saydel Consolidated, Southeast Polk Community, Urbandale Community, and West Des Moines Community, which are located in Polk County in the state of Iowa.

The names of the teachers, the grades they teach, and the school addresses were obtained from the 1968-1969 Polk County Directory furnished by the Polk County Board of Education and the 1968-1969 Directory of Des Moines Public Schools furnished by the same school district. These were not available until December 13, 1968.

The population surveyed consisted of fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade teachers. Substitute or special teachers such as remedial reading, physical education, art, music, or foreign language teachers were not included nor were teachers of combinations of third and fourth grades.

CHAPTER II

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The data used in making conclusions in this investigation were gathered by means of a questionnaire. A more specific description of how they were gathered is presented below.

I. PROCEDURE FOR COLLECTING DATA

The survey was made by means of a questionnaire mailed to a random sample of intermediate grade teachers in Polk County, Iowa. All teachers were asked to indicate how they taught listening and the amount of time spent doing so by use of a numeral, or by checking one or a selection of responses. In addition to these items, they were asked to check whether or not their school district provided specified aids for teaching listening.

II. PROCEDURE FOR SELECTING THE POPULATION

The population for the investigation was collected from the 1968-1969 Polk County Directory and the 1968-1969 Directory of Des Moines Public Schools. Each book provides a list of current teachers, the grade levels taught and the school addresses. In the nine public school districts in Polk County there was found to be a population of 440

fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade teachers or teachers of combinations of these grades. Substitute or special teachers such as remedial reading, physical education, art, music, or foreign language teachers were not included. Teachers of combinations of third and fourth grades were not considered. The eligible teachers of each school district were assigned a number. A random drawing of 25 per cent of the total teachers in each district was taken from a box containing slips of paper which had the numbers assigned to teachers of that particular district. Each slip contained only one numeral. Questionnaires were sent to the teachers who had been selected by this method.

III. QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION

Because one of the purposes of this investigation was to compare listening practices in Polk County, Iowa with those found to be practiced by teachers in four counties in the state of Washington by Stewart Van Wingerden, the author selected special items from the questionnaire he had used. The construction of Van Wingerden's questionnaire took place over a period of several years and was tried out on over two hundred subjects. After revisions were made the questionnaire was used in his investigation of listening practices in four counties in the state of Washington. The author of the present survey selected appropriate items suitable for

supplying information concerning the problem of her own investigation.

A total of 110 copies of the revised questionnaire were numbered consecutively for identification of responses and sent to the randomly selected teachers. A cover letter explaining the importance of the survey accompanied each questionnaire (see Appendix) along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope for returning the information.

IV. MAILING PROCEDURE

The first mailing consisting of a copy of the questionnaire, the first cover letter, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope was completed on December 14, 1968. Because the schools in this area closed December 20th for Christmas vacation and because all schools did not reconvene until January 5th, a follow-up letter reminding the teachers of the importance of responding was not mailed until January 13, 1969. This allowed ten school days in which the teachers could return their questionnaire before they were sent a reminder. The letters of January 13th were mailed to fifty individuals after 55.4 per cent of the returns had been received. The second and final follow-up letter was mailed seven days later when 69 per cent of the questionnaires had been returned. This mailing to thirty four individuals consisted of a second questionnaire, a stamped,

self-addressed envelope, and a letter indicating the questionnaire was sent in the event the first one had been lost. The second set of questionnaires were coded with numerals 111 through 144 to identify the responders in the event they wished a copy of the abstract of the investigation, and to note the district the respondent represented. Sixteen days later the total response was 85.5 per cent. It was assumed that another letter would not accomplish much and would perhaps antagonize the teachers so the tabulation of responses was made February 5, 1969 with 85.5 per cent of the sample returned.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

The response to the survey is presented here in three sections; degree of response, the manner of response, and comparisons of responses to those given in Van Wingerden's study.

Degree of response includes the responses broken down by characteristics of teachers, and school districts.

I. DEGREE OF RESPONSE

Of the 110 questionnaires mailed to the intermediate grade teachers, 85.5 per cent, or 94 teachers, responded. Of the 94 responses, 5 were found to be of limited value because they were incomplete, or because the teacher's assignment had been changed recently.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHERS RESPONDING

No attempt was made to keep an equal percentage of teachers from each grade level but rather a random selection from all grades represented. In the study the fourth-grade teachers made up 40 per cent of the sample, approximately 43 per cent of the total respondents, and approximately 25 per cent of the total number of non-respondents (see Table I, page 21). Approximately 24 per cent of the sample,

21 per cent of the respondents, and the highest percentage of non-respondents with 38 per cent, consisted of sixth-grade teachers. The fifth-grade teachers, who made up the smallest percentage of any group in the sample, with the exception of the combination grades, consisted of close to 20 per cent of the respondents, and also had the smallest percentage of non-respondents, with the exception of the combination grades.

TABLE I
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS AND NON-
RESPONDENTS BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	Sample		Respondents		Non-Respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
4	44	40.0	40	42.6	4	25.0
5	23	20.9	20	21.3	3	18.8
6	26	23.6	20	21.3	6	37.5
4-5	4	3.7	3	3.2	1	6.3
4-5-6 ...	3	2.7	2	2.1	1	6.3
5-6	10	9.9	9	9.6	1	6.3
Total	110	100.0	94	100.1	16	100.2

The class sizes of the teachers responding to this item ranged from 14 to 130 pupils. Classes of 26 to 31 pupils made up 41.5 per cent of the respondents and 72.3 per cent of the classes were included in the range between 20

and 31 (see Table II). Teachers indicating 43 students or more, had departmentalized classroom organization but did not indicate the average of each section.

TABLE II
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
BY SIZE OF CLASS TAUGHT

No. of Pupils Per Class	Respondents	
	No.	%
14-19	5	5.3
20-25	29	30.8
26-31	39	41.5
32-37	9	9.6
38-42	2	2.1
43+	5	5.3
No response	5	5.3
Total	94	99.9

The self-contained classroom made up 39.5 per cent of the sample; 31.4 per cent of the teachers said they taught departmentalized groups, and 29 per cent taught semi-departmentalized groups.

Slightly less than 8 per cent of the teachers had taken a college course in the teaching of listening, whereas 83.1 per cent had had no such training. The questionnaire

did not provide a response to indicate training in connection with a method's course in communication skills, but 9 per cent made comments that this was the extent of their training.

In summary, the characteristics of teachers who responded were typical in terms of grades taught, size of class, classroom organization, and training in the teaching of listening.

CHARACTERISTICS OF DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS

In each of the nine districts, a response was received from at least 78 per cent of the teachers sampled (see Table III, page 24). The size of the districts is suggested by the number of current intermediate teachers. Six of the districts returned 100 per cent of their questionnaires. The largest district had the smallest return of 78.5 per cent.

Half of those responding to the item concerning available aids indicated that they were provided with pupil textbooks, which provided instruction in listening, whereas less than one-third were provided with curriculum guides which offered substantial suggestions for teaching listening. Slightly more than one-eighth were provided with supervisional help, and less than one-thirteenth were provided with listening workshops (see Table IV, page 25).

TABLE III
RESPONSE BY DISTRICTS IN THE SAMPLE

District	Total 4, 5, 6 Teachers	No. in Sample	No. of Re- spondents	% of Response
Ankeny	25	6	6	100.0
Bondurant-Farrar	5	1	1	100.0
Des Moines	260	65	51	78.5
Johnston	12	3	3	100.0
North Polk	9	2	2	100.0
Saydel	23	6	5	83.3
Southeast Polk	24	6	6	100.0
Urbandale	28	7	6	85.7
West Des Moines	54	14	14	100.0
Total	440	110	94	85.5 (avg.)

In summary the nine districts had considerable range of size and were well represented. It appears that aids for teaching listening are not available in sufficient quantity.

II. MANNER OF RESPONSE

Teachers responding to items in regard to the skills they taught in listening, how they taught them, and how much they taught them, answered in a variety of ways.

Manner of response includes the responses broken down to the amount listening is taught, the methods used to teach

listening, and a discription of what listening skills are taught.

TABLE IV
LISTENING TEACHING AIDS AVAILABLE TO RESPONDENTS

Aids Provided	Yes	No	No re- sponse	% Yes
Texts including listening	47	38	9	50.0
Curriculum guides including listening	26	58	10	27.7
Supervisory help in listening	12	71	11	12.8
Workshops related to listening	7	75	12	7.5

RESPONSES DESCRIBING THE AMOUNT LISTENING IS TAUGHT

In response to the sixth question on the questionnaire concerning the total amount of hours spent each month teaching listening skills by all methods, the answers were from one extreme to the other. The teachers were to assume one month as a total of twenty, $5\frac{1}{2}$ -hour days, or 110 hours. Two teachers said their total listening instruction for a month was one-half hour or less. Three teachers said they taught 90 or more hours by all three methods; two of the three said listening was taught during all 110 hours. Forty per cent of the teachers who responded said they spent less than 20 hours per month, 23 per cent said they spent less

than 10 hours per month, and 18.5 per cent (twelve teachers) said they spent five hours or less (see Table V, page 27). The mean number of hours spent was 31.1 and the median was 20.3. The median number of hours for fourth-grade teachers was 24.2, for fifth-grade teachers it was 20, as it also was for sixth-grade teachers. The means were 36.1 for the fourth grade, 28.5 for the fifth grade, and 24 for the sixth grade. The great variation in the number of hours was apparent within districts of all sizes. A large percentage of the teachers, 30.9, did not respond to this question and a few commented that they were either unable or unwilling to estimate the time they spent.

When asked to rank the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in order of the amount they were emphasized in their classroom, reading was ranked first in nearly 75 per cent of the responses (see Table VI, page 28). A great deal more teachers ranked listening first than ranked either writing or speaking first. Listening was given a more equal number of rankings for first, second, third, and fourth than did any other skill. Listening received 36.9 per cent of the responses for second emphasis, writing was 25 per cent, and speaking was 22.4 per cent.

The teachers were also asked to estimate how frequently each of the five skills defined in the investigation as the major factors in listening ability were taught (see

TABLE V
 NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS GROUPED
 ACCORDING TO HOURS LISTENING
 IS TAUGHT PER MONTH*

No. of Hours	Teachers Responding	
	No.	%
0	0	0
1-9	15	23.1
10-19	11	16.9
20-29	17	26.2
30-39	4	6.1
40-49	4	6.1
50-59	5	7.7
60-69	1	1.5
70-79	2	3.1
80-89	3	4.6
90 or more	3	4.6
Total	65	99.9
No response	29	
Total	94	

*Assuming twenty $5\frac{1}{2}$ -hour days or 110 total teaching hours per month.

Table VII, page 29). Six teachers said they taught all five skills by all three methods every day, and twenty five said they taught all five skills by all three methods less often than daily. A total of nine taught all five skills by "direct, planned instruction" every day, fourteen taught all the skills "as part of reading instruction" every day, and twenty said they taught all five skills by "incidental instruction" every day. Those who indicated they never taught one of the skills by any method were two for skill "a," four for "b," six for "c," two for "d," and eight for skill "e."

TABLE VI

RANKING ACCORDING TO EMPHASIS PLACED ON TEACHING
OF READING, WRITING, SPEAKING, AND LISTENING

Rank	No. of Respondents by Subject			
	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening
First	56	3	4	15
Second	12	19	17	28
Third	4	19	32	17
Fourth	3	33	20	18
No Response ..	19	20	21	16
Total	94	94	94	94

In summary, the responses indicate the use of incidental instruction of each of the skills taught daily was greater than the use of either of the other two methods.

TABLE VII

FREQUENCY FIVE LISTENING SKILLS ARE TAUGHT BY THREE METHODS

Skills Taught	No. of Respondents																				
	By Direct, Planned, Instruction							As a Part of Reading Instruction							By Incidental Instruction						
	Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly	Monthly	Bi-monthly	Yearly	Never	Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly	Monthly	Bi-monthly	Yearly	Never	Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly	Monthly	Bi-monthly	Yearly	Never
a. Distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant ideas	25	16	4	8	2	3	21	37	14	5	7	1	0	14	46	11	3	4	0	0	14
b. Discovering the central idea when listening	26	21	3	2	2	1	23	37	20	1	3	2	0	16	42	17	3	3	1	0	12
c. Making full use of context clues when listening	25	18	3	0	2	2	29	38	18	2	3	2	0	16	38	15	7	3	1	0	14
d. Making logical inferences from what is listened to	29	21	4	2	3	2	18	35	16	5	3	0	1	19	47	15	2	3	0	1	10
e. Following without loss a fairly complex thought unit when listening	19	14	5	7	3	3	28	21	22	8	4	1	1	22	34	20	4	3	2	1	14

However, the results were more evenly distributed among the three methods for teaching each of the skills at least once a week. Skills never taught in a direct, planned manner tended to be greater than respective skills by the other two methods.

RESPONSES DESCRIBING METHODS USED IN TEACHING LISTENING

The responders were asked to indicate methods they used when teaching listening in an attempt to determine whether or not the instruction was consciously planned, presented, and evaluated. Three methods defined in this study, the same as those used by Van Wingerden in his investigation, were; (1) "Direct, planned instruction," (2) "As a part of reading instruction," and (3) "Incidental instruction." The teachers were asked how often and how much they used these methods in teaching listening skills. Tables VIII, IX, and X are the tabulations of their responses.

The data indicated that 50.6 per cent of the teachers used incidental instruction for half or more than half of listening instruction time, 27.1 per cent used direct, planned instruction for 50 per cent or more of listening instruction time, and 20 per cent used part of their reading instruction for 50 or more per cent of the time. The teachers indicated 80 per cent used part of the reading instruction for less than half of the time they used to teach

listening, 72.9 per cent used the direct, planned instruction less than half of the time, but only 45.9 per cent indicated they used incidental instruction less than half of the time (see Table VIII, page 32).

Table IX, which is a summary of Table VII, shows the methods used by the teachers as they taught the five basic listening skills. Incidental instruction appeared to be used more frequently than direct, planned instruction or as part of reading instruction. Direct, planned instruction was indicated more frequently as never being used to teach all five skills (see Table IX, page 33).

In investigation of the techniques used to teach listening, 56.4 per cent of the teachers said they seldom, or never do teach it as a separate subject, and approximately the same proportion said they seldom if ever made specific lesson plans for teaching listening. Over 76 per cent said they seldom, if ever gave grades in listening skills and over 85 per cent said they seldom, or never grouped children according to ability for listening instruction. Table X, page 33, shows the response of how frequently each of the four techniques were used.

To determine the kind of evaluation being done in the teaching of listening, the teachers were asked whether or not their pupils were given formal tests of hearing, listening, vision, reading, and arithmetic. Listening was by far

TABLE VIII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS BY PERCENTAGE
OF TIME USING THREE METHODS FOR
LISTENING INSTRUCTION

Percentage of Time Used	Respondents by Method Used					
	Direct, Planned Instruction		Part of Reading Instruction		Incidental Instruction	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0	8	9.4	5	5.9	0	0.0
1-10	18	21.2	13	15.3	7	8.0
11-20	16	18.6	10	11.8	11	12.9
21-30	16	18.6	24	28.0	16	18.6
31-40	4	4.7	16	18.6	8	9.4
41-50	14	16.5	12	14.1	22	25.9
51-60	5	5.9	3	3.5	5	5.9
61-70	1	1.2	1	1.2	5	5.9
71-80	2	2.4	1	1.2	5	5.9
81-90	1	1.2	0	0	4	4.7
91-100	0	0	0	0	2	2.4

TABLE IX

FREQUENCY ALL FIVE LISTENING SKILLS ARE TAUGHT
BY THREE METHODS

Method	No. of Teachers							Never
	Daily	Weekly	Bi-weekly	Monthly	Bi-monthly	Yearly	Total	
Direct, planned Instruction	124	90	19	19	12	11	276	112
Part of reading Instruction	168	91	21	20	6	4	308	84
Incidental Instruction	208	78	19	16	4	2	327	63

TABLE X

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO HOW
FREQUENTLY FOUR TECHNIQUES ARE USED

Technique Used	Percentage of Respondents by Frequency					Total
	Always	Often	Seldom	Never	No Resp.	
Teach listening as separate subject	5.3	29.8	39.4	17.0	8.5	100.0
Make lesson plans for listening	2.1	34.0	31.9	23.4	8.5	99.9
Give grades in listening	8.5	7.4	18.1	58.5	7.4	99.9
Group children for listening instruction	1.1	6.4	14.9	70.2	7.4	100.0

the least tested of the five areas (see Table XI).

TABLE XI
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO ADMINISTER CERTAIN
FORMAL TESTS

Type of Test	Percentage of Respondents			
	Yes	No	No Resp.	Total
Hearing	75.5	5.3	19.1	99.9
Listening	58.5	26.5	14.9	99.9
Vision	84.0	4.3	11.7	100.0
Reading	88.3	4.3	7.5	100.1
Arithmetic ...	81.9	6.4	11.7	100.0

In summary, the data indicated listening instruction tended to be of an unplanned nature and ineffectively evaluated in sharp contrast to the usual instruction in other skill subjects.

The author attempted to interpret from items in the questionnaire concerning training and the amount of assistance and encouragement teachers received from their district, as to how well prepared they would be for teaching listening. Only a small number, 7 of 89 teachers, said they had ever taken college course work intended to help them teach listening. A very small number indicated by an added comment they had received listening instruction in a

communication skills course. Table IV, page 25, shows only a small minority of the teachers were provided with curriculum guides, or courses of study, containing teaching suggestions, with in-service workshops aimed at improving listening instruction, or with supervisory assistance. Over half, however, had pupil textbooks available. Table V, page 27, and Table VII, page 29, show a majority of the teachers teach listening incidentally, which would appear to indicate that skills are not being presented in an orderly manner, suggests evaluation is less than desirable, and that there is a great difference from teacher to teacher in terms of what is taught under the label "listening."

III. RESPONSES COMPARED WITH THOSE GATHERED IN VAN WINGERDEN'S STUDY

The purpose of this study is not only to determine the present practices in the teaching of listening skills in the intermediate grades in the school districts in Polk County, Iowa, but also to compare the results gained, with those found by Van Wingerden in his survey of four counties in the state of Washington.

In the Iowa survey, 40 per cent of the questionnaires were sent to fourth-grade teachers, approximately 21 per cent to fifth-grade teachers, 24 per cent to sixth-grade teachers, and 16 per cent to combination-grade teachers. The Washington survey included approximately 31 per cent

fourth-grade teachers, 34 per cent fifth-grade teachers 27 per cent sixth-grade teachers and 8 per cent combination-grade teachers. The fourth-grade teachers responded with the highest percentage in both studies. Fifth and sixth grade teachers replied in equal proportions in the Iowa survey; more fifth-grade teachers replied than sixth-grade teachers in the Washington survey. The combination-grade teachers made up a small proportion of both surveys, but the Iowa study had almost twice as many as did the Washington study (see Table XII).

TABLE XII
COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS IN
WASHINGTON AND IOWA

Grade	Sample		Respondents		Non-Respondents	
	Wash.	Iowa	Wash.	Iowa	Wash.	Iowa
4	31.0	40.0	30.8	42.6	32.4	25.0
5	33.7	20.9	34.6	21.3	26.5	18.8
6	27.3	23.6	26.3	21.3	35.3	37.5
4-5	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.2	5.9	6.3
4-5-6 ..	.3	2.7	.4	2.1	0	6.3
5-6	3.7	9.9	4.1	9.6	0	6.3
Total	100.0	100.8	100.0	100.1	100.0	100.2

Both surveys asked whether or not the teachers had received college work in listening instruction. A very

large percentage of teachers in both surveys said they had no such training. A few teachers in Iowa wrote comments on their questionnaire indicating they had some training as a part of a Communication's class. Over 83 per cent of the teachers in both studies said they had not received college training in listening instruction (see Table XIII).

TABLE XIII

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS IN WASHINGTON
AND IOWA WITH COLLEGE HELP IN LISTENING

College Course in Listening	Yes	No	Only as part of Communication's Skill
Washington	8.7	91.3	0.0
Iowa	7.9	83.1	9.0

An attempt was made to determine the amount of aid teachers were given by their school districts. Fifty per cent of the Iowa teachers said they were provided with textbooks containing instruction in listening, whereas 44.7 per cent of the Washington teachers said they had such help. However, a greater percentage of Washington teachers received help through curriculum guides, supervisory help and workshops than the Iowa teachers said they received. It must also be noted that neither study had over 50 per cent of its teachers who received any one particular aid mentioned above (see Table XIV, page 38).

TABLE XIV
COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS IN WASHINGTON
AND IOWA WITH LISTENING TEACHING AIDS
AVAILABLE TO THEM

Aids Provided	Yes		No	
	Wash.	Iowa	Wash.	Iowa
Texts including listening	44.7	50.0	47.4	40.4
Curriculum guides including listening	34.2	27.7	53.0	61.7
Supervisory help in listening	27.4	12.8	65.0	75.5
Workshops related to listening	14.3	7.5	73.0	79.8

An enormous range of responses was received in both studies when the teachers were asked to estimate the number of hours per month they taught listening. They were to assume one month to be a total of twenty, $5\frac{1}{2}$ -hour days, or 110 hours. Three teachers in Washington said they spent no hours teaching listening and four others said they spent 90 or more hours per month. Two teachers in Iowa said they taught one-half hour or less and three others said they taught it during all 110 hours. According to tabulations of responses, a smaller percentage of teachers in Iowa taught less than 20 hours per month than did teachers in Washington (see Table XV, page 40). The mean number of hours spent by teachers in Iowa was 31.1 and the median was 20.3. The mean

number of hours spent by the teachers in Washington was 22.0 and the median was 13.1. The fourth-grade teachers in both studies taught listening more hours per month than teachers of the other grades. The median number of hours for fourth-grade teachers in Iowa was 24.2, for fifth-grade teachers it was 20, as it also was for sixth-grade teachers. The median hours for fourth-grade teachers in Washington was 17.9, for fifth-grade teachers it was 13.7 and for sixth-grade teachers it was 14.2. In the Iowa survey the means were 36.1 for the fourth grade, 28.5 for the fifth grade, and 24 for the sixth grade, whereas in the Washington survey the means were 26.2 for the fourth, 23.2 for fifth, and 18.7 for sixth.

Iowa teachers indicated they used the incidental method the greatest amount of the time in listening instruction. Slightly more than half of the teachers used the incidental method for 50 per cent or more of listening instruction. Only 27.1 per cent of the teachers used the direct, planned method that much and an even smaller percentage of the teachers used part of reading class for teaching listening 50 per cent or more of their listening instruction. A smaller proportion of the teachers in Washington used any one method for 50 per cent or more of their listening time. The incidental method was used, however, by 43.7 per cent of the Washington teachers for half, or more, of listening instruction time. Only 18.6 per cent of their

teachers used the direct, planned approach for the same amount of time and 26.8 per cent used part of reading to teach listening skills (see Table XVI, page 41).

TABLE XV

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS OF WASHINGTON
AND IOWA GROUPED ACCORDING TO TOTAL HOURS
LISTENING IS TAUGHT PER MONTH*

No. of Hours	Percentage of Teachers Responding	
	Washington	Iowa
0	1.4	0
1-9	32.7	23.1
10-19	20.7	16.9
20-29	18.4	26.2
30-39	5.1	6.1
40-49	4.1	6.1
50-59	7.8	7.7
60-69	4.6	1.5
70-79	1.4	3.1
80-89	1.8	4.6
90 or more	1.8	4.6
Total	99.8	99.9

*Assuming twenty $5\frac{1}{2}$ -hour days or 110 total teaching hours per month.

TABLE XVI

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS OF WASHINGTON
AND IOWA BY METHOD USED

Percentage of Time Used	Direct, Planned Instruction		Part of Reading Instruction		Incidental Instruction	
	Wash.	Iowa	Wash.	Iowa	Wash.	Iowa
0	12.6	9.4	6.3	5.9	0.4	0.0
1-10	27.6	21.2	15.4	15.4	12.2	8.0
11-20	13.0	18.6	16.9	11.8	13.4	12.9
21-30	16.9	18.6	20.5	28.0	22.1	18.6
31-40	11.0	4.7	14.2	18.6	7.9	9.4
41-50	10.2	16.5	16.5	14.1	10.6	25.9
51-60	3.2	5.9	5.1	3.5	4.7	5.9
61-70	2.0	1.2	2.8	1.2	6.7	5.9
71-80	2.8	2.4	1.6	1.2	6.7	5.9
81-90	0	1.2	0.8	0	9.5	4.7
91-100	0.4	0	0	0	5.5	2.4

A comparison of the frequency four techniques were used by teachers in the two surveys showed that a slightly smaller percentage of teachers in Iowa seldom or never used a particular technique than teachers in Washington (see Table XVII, page 42). The technique least used by teachers in both surveys was grouping the children according to listening ability for instructional purposes.

Formal testing of listening in the Iowa classrooms

was performed less often than formal testing of the other skill subjects. Approximately 59 per cent of the Iowa teachers gave formal tests in listening whereas nearly 37 per cent of the Washington teachers gave such tests (see Table XVIII, page 43).

TABLE XVII

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS OF WASHINGTON
AND IOWA ACCORDING TO HOW FREQUENTLY FOUR
TECHNIQUES ARE USED

Technique Used	Percentage of Respondents by Frequency	
	Seldom or Never in Washington	Seldom or Never in Iowa
Teach listening as a separate subject	62.8	56.4
Make lesson plans for lis- tening	64.7	55.3
Give grades in listening	74.8	76.6
Group children	90.6	85.1

TABLE XVIII
COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS OF WASHINGTON
AND IOWA WHO ADMINISTER CERTAIN FORMAL TESTS

Type of Test	Percentage of Respondents	
	Washington	Iowa
Hearing	74.1	75.5
Listening	36.5	58.5
Vision	88.0	84.0
Reading	86.5	88.3
Arithmetic	80.1	81.9

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The field study was concerned with determining the present practices in teaching listening skills in the intermediate grades in Polk County, Iowa and making a comparison of the results obtained with those found to be true in four counties in the state of Washington by Van Wingerden. The data gathered by means of questionnaires were analyzed with the afore-mentioned problem in mind. It was attempted, first, to establish the extent to which listening, by all methods, was taught. The author studied responses related to the content of listening instruction to determine whether or not teachers were aware of and teaching specific skills selected from a well-organized curriculum plan in listening. Certain characteristics of the teachers and school districts who responded were analyzed in their relationship to listening instruction. The amount of teaching listening by the direct, planned method was determined. The results of the preceeding information were compared with similar data gathered by Van Wingerden in the state of Washington.

I. AMOUNT OF INSTRUCTION IN LISTENING SKILLS

In order to determine the amount of listening instruction of all types that takes place, the teachers were

asked to estimate the total hours spent teaching listening each month and the extent they emphasized listening instruction in comparison to instruction in reading, writing, and speaking.

TOTAL HOURS PER MONTH TEACHING LISTENING SKILLS

The data show a mean of 31.1 and a median of 20.3 total hours which these teachers said they teach listening each month. Less time is spent on listening by 18.5 per cent of the teachers than on arithmetic, social studies, or reading even if one assumed a minimum of one-half hour per day spent on each of these basic subjects. Close to 46 per cent of the teachers said they spent from 20-59 hours per month teaching listening, which would be equivalent to one to three hours per day. Nine teachers said they spent from three to $5\frac{1}{2}$ -hours per day teaching listening. It would appear their estimate of time spent was made by use of a different definition for the word "teach" than was intended. In an over-all view nearly two-thirds of those responding said they taught listening less than 30 hours per month (see Table V, page 27).

EMPHASIS PLACED ON THE TEACHING OF LISTENING IN RELATION TO THE EMPHASIS PLACED ON READING WRITING, AND SPEAKING

When asked to rank the four communication skills in

order of the amount each skill was emphasized in their classroom, 56 out of 94 of the teachers ranked reading first. Listening received the largest number of second-rank votes (see Table VI, page 28) and received nearly four times the number of first-rank votes than writing or speaking.

If the largest number of responses in each rank was used as the determiner, the rank order of emphasis would be reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

The range of opinion concerning the importance of listening instruction was evident in the evenly distributed responses in each of the four ranks where listening was concerned. This was not true of the other three communication skills.

AMOUNT OF LISTENING INSTRUCTION RELATED TO GRADE TAUGHT, AND SIZE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT

The grade level appeared to be a determining factor in the amount of listening instruction given. The mean and median hours for the fourth-grade teachers were greater than those for fifth, sixth, or combination-grade teachers. The median number of hours for fourth-grade teachers was 24.2, for fifth-grade teachers it was 20, as it also was for sixth-grade teachers. The means were 36.1 for the fourth-grade, 28.5 for the fifth grade, and 24 for the sixth grade.

Because there was a wide range in the number of hours listening was taught in all the school districts, it would seem the size of a school district is not a determining factor in the amount of listening instruction that is given.

SUMMARY OF AMOUNT OF INSTRUCTION IN LISTENING SKILLS

In summarizing the data regarding the amount of listening instruction, the following generalizations were made. The teachers said they spent a relatively large number (a mean of 31.1) hours per month teaching listening, although there is some reason to doubt the accuracy of their estimates in this respect. A majority of teachers put less emphasis on listening instruction than they do reading instruction. More listening instruction takes place in the fourth grades.

II. AMOUNT OF DIRECT, PLANNED INSTRUCTION OF LISTENING SKILLS

This study was primarily concerned with direct, planned instruction of listening skills. It was felt that teachers do not understand the specific skills involved in listening and therefore have attempted to teach listening incidentally rather than doing the careful planning and direct teaching of specific skills as they do for arithmetic, reading, and most other subject areas.

The following discussion of the results in respect to the amount of direct, planned instruction will include:

(1) comparing the percentage of time spent teaching by the "direct, planned," "part of reading," and "incidental" methods; (2) comparing the frequency the three methods were used in teaching specific listening skills; and (3) interpreting responses which indicated degree to which teachers taught listening by the direct, planned method including the use of separate time periods, grouping and grading of pupils, and availability of teaching aids.

PERCENTAGE OF TIME USING DIRECT, PLANNED INSTRUCTION

Table VII, page 29, shows graphically that in general teachers spent a higher percentage of their time teaching listening either incidentally or as a part of the reading program than they do using the direct, planned approach. Table XIX, page 49 shows the lack of relationship between percentage of direct, planned instruction and total hours per month. Table XX, page 49 shows that the teachers who use the direct method 25-100 per cent of the time tend to rank listening as second in importance.

It would seem that some teachers misunderstood some items or in a natural attempt to make themselves look good overestimated some answers. For instance, one teacher indicated she taught over three hours a day by the direct,

TABLE XIX

PERCENTAGE OF DIRECT, PLANNED LISTENING INSTRUCTION
RELATED TO TOTAL HOURS LISTENING IS TAUGHT PER MONTH

Total Hours Per Month	Percentage of Direct, Planned Instruction				
	No. of Teachers by Percentage				
	75-99%	50-74%	25-49%	0-24%	Total
25-99	1	10	6	9	26
0-24	0	6	7	25	38
Total	1	16	13	34	64

TABLE XX

PERCENTAGE OF DIRECT, PLANNED LISTENING INSTRUCTION
RELATED TO RANK OF EMPHASIS PLACED ON LISTENING
IN RELATION TO OTHER COMMUNICATION SKILLS

% of Direct, Planned Instruction	Rank of Emphasis on Listening				
	No. of Teachers by Rank				
	1	2	3	4	Total
25-100	7	17	6	5	35
0-24	7	11	9	11	38
Total	14	28	15	16	73

planned method and five others said they spent two hours or more a day by the direct method. Fourteen teachers said they spent more than an hour a day teaching listening skills in a direct manner, but five of the fourteen said they

seldom or never taught listening as a separate subject. Only three of these fourteen teachers ranked listening as of first importance. One of these teachers giving listening first emphasis said she seldom taught it as a separate subject and another one gave no response to that item. Two of these fourteen teachers, who used the direct method of teaching listening for two hours or more a day, gave listening a third ranking. Four other respondents said they often made lesson plans for teaching listening skills and taught by the direct, planned method a large percentage of the time but would not, or could not indicate the hours per month used to teach listening. Another respondent said she gave listening the greatest emphasis but never taught listening as a separate subject, seldom made lesson plans and could not, or would not determine the percentage the direct, planned method was used in the hours per month spent teaching listening skills.

FREQUENCY FIVE SKILLS ARE TAUGHT BY THREE METHODS

The five skills used to define listening for this study were taught more frequently (when they were taught at all) by incidental instruction or as a part of reading instruction than they were by direct, planned instruction, and these skills were "never" taught by the direct method more often than by the other two methods (see Table IX, page 33).

Six teachers said they taught all five skills by all three methods every day and twenty-five said they taught all five skills by all three methods less often than daily. A total of nine said they taught all five skills by direct, planned approach every day, fourteen said they taught all five skills as part of reading instruction every day, and twenty said they taught all five skills by the incidental approach every day. It appears these teachers misunderstood this item as it would seem difficult to be able to teach each of the five skills daily without slighting other basic subjects. It would appear to be even more difficult to teach all five skills by all three methods, daily. The majority of the teachers said they taught most of these five skills by one method or another some time during the year although skill "e," following without loss a fairly complex thought unit when listening, seemed to be left out more often than the other skills.

USE OF TECHNIQUES AND AIDS RELATED TO DIRECT, PLANNED INSTRUCTION OF LISTENING SKILLS

The data gathered in this study show teachers do not seem to teach listening skills as they do other skill subjects such as reading or arithmetic.

The 56 per cent of the teachers who said they seldom or never teach listening as a separate subject evidently see little need for treating listening as they do other skill

subjects (see Table X, page 33). Grouping, another technique used to individualize instruction, was seldom, if ever, used by 85 per cent of the respondents. Although 77 per cent of the teachers said they seldom, if ever, gave grades in listening, a smaller proportion, 27 per cent, said their students would not be given a formal listening test this year (see Table XI, page 34). It is apparent that little formal evaluation of growth in listening ability is done at this level by a majority of the teachers.

It would seem reasonable to assume that teachers who seldom plan or organize their instruction and who teach skills incidentally probably tend to ignore a scope and sequence in the development of listening skills. Lesson plans were seldom, if ever, made by 55 per cent of the teachers of this study which brings one to the assumption that the skills are not presented in an organized fashion. The fact that only 28 per cent said that curriculum guides offering help in listening content and method were available and that only 8 per cent received help by workshops, helps to explain teacher reluctance to teach listening in an organized program (see Table XIV, page 38). One can also appreciate their reluctance when viewing the fact that only 17 per cent of the teachers had had a college course which included the teaching of listening (see Table XIII, page 37).

SUMMARY OF AMOUNT OF DIRECT PLANNED INSTRUCTION OF LISTENING SKILLS

The results of the study concerning the amount of direct, planned listening instruction that is provided could be summarized as: (1) the teachers said they spent less time using the direct, planned approach than they do teaching listening as part of the reading program or by incidental instruction, (2) they said they taught the five skills used as a definition of listening skills in the study but they usually taught them incidentally, and (3) few teachers said they taught listening as a separate subject, grouped their students by ability for listening instruction, gave grades in listening, had taken a listening course, or felt sufficient teaching aids were provided for listening instruction.

III. COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITH THOSE GATHERED IN THE VAN WINGERDEN STUDY

Teachers returning questionnaires in this study gave similar responses as those who responded in the survey conducted by Van Wingerden in the state of Washington in 1965.

The greatest percentage of teachers responding in both studies were those who taught fourth grade, and the combination-grade teachers made up the smallest proportion in both surveys (see Table XII, page 36).

The teachers in Washington and Iowa were asked

whether or not they had received college training in methods and content of listening instruction. Over 83 per cent of the respondents in both studies said they had no college training in listening instruction (see Table XIII, page 37). In view of the lack of college work and the lack of listening teaching aids available to both those teachers in Iowa and Washington it is not surprising that teachers in both states tend to teach listening in an unplanned manner (see Table XIV, page 38). Slightly more teachers in Iowa said they had pupil textbooks available than did the teachers in Washington. However, the teachers in Washington had more help from curriculum guides, supervisory personnel and inservice workshops than did teachers of Iowa. Neither survey indicated over 50 per cent of its teachers had a particular aid available to them.

The range of responses from teachers of both studies, when asked to estimate the number of hours per month they taught listening, was great. Three teachers in Washington said they spent no hours teaching listening and four others said they spent 90 or more hours per month. Two teachers in Iowa said they taught listening during all 110 hours. Iowa teachers indicated they spent more hours per month teaching listening than the teachers of Washington. Fourth-grade teachers in both studies taught listening more hours per month than teachers of the other grades.

Iowa and Washington teachers disagreed on the amount of emphasis given to listening in their classrooms. Teachers in Washington ranked it fourth in importance whereas Iowa teachers said they gave it second importance in the classroom. Both surveys showed a wide range of opinion in the importance of listening instruction by the fairly evenly distributed responses in each of the four ranks.

A greater number of Iowa teachers used the incidental method 50 per cent or more of listening instruction time than did the teachers in Washington. The Iowa teachers also indicated more of them used the direct, planned method 50 per cent or more of listening instruction time than teachers in Washington.

A large number of teachers in both surveys said they seldom or never used a particular technique. Grouping children according to listening ability for instructional purposes was carried out the least of the four techniques presented, by teachers of both Iowa and Washington.

Formal testing of listening in both surveys was conducted less often than formal testing of other skills. Even though over half of the Iowa teachers administered formal listening tests, over 75 per cent of the responders indicated grades were seldom, if ever, given, and at least 85 per cent seldom, if ever, grouped the children for listening instruction. Thus, it would appear that in addition to

formally testing listening the least of all communication skills, not enough is being done with the results of the tests that are given. The data indicate this is true to an even greater degree in the Washington survey.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to determine to what extent direct, planned listening instruction is carried on by intermediate teachers in Polk County, Iowa and to compare the results with those results found to be true by Van Wingerden in King, Snohomish, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties in the state of Washington.

Data were gathered by questionnaire responses of 94 of the 110 teachers randomly selected from the 440 fourth, fifth, and sixth grade teachers.

I. AMOUNT OF LISTENING INSTRUCTION

The intermediate teachers in Polk County, Iowa teach listening a mean of 31.1 hours and a median of 20.3 hours. Listening was taught by all methods 5 hours or less a month by 19 per cent of the teachers. This is less time than is spent on arithmetic, social studies, or reading, even if one assumed a minimum of one-half hour a day on each of these subjects.

Teachers said they emphasized listening next to reading. The order of ranks determined by the largest number of response for each subject, was: reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

II. AMOUNT OF DIRECT, PLANNED INSTRUCTION

In general, the teachers surveyed spent a higher percentage of their time teaching listening either incidentally or as a part of the reading program than they do using the direct, planned approach.

The majority of the teachers said they taught most of the five skills by one method or another some time during the year, but they tended to do so by an incidental approach.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHERS WHO USE THE DIRECT, PLANNED APPROACH

The majority of the teachers do not have teaching aids such as pupil textbooks, curriculum guides, workshops or supervisory help directly aimed at improving listening instruction. Many do not group children for listening instruction or give grades.

The amount of direct, planned instruction did not appear to be related to the size of the school district, but teachers who use the direct, planned approach do tend to teach it as a separate subject and make lesson plans.

IV. COMPARISON OF RESULTS OF THIS STUDY WITH THOSE FOUND BY VAN WINGERDEN

Responses from teachers in Iowa were very similar to those given by teachers in the state of Washington. Both

also believe listening is important and also gave similar data to the same questions asked of fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade teachers in four counties located in the state of Washington. Information gained from both surveys showed the following information:

1. Teachers said they used relatively large amounts of time teaching listening skills, but most of the time it was presented incidentally with little planning or evaluation;
2. Teachers differ greatly in their estimates of amount of emphasis they place on the teaching of listening skills;
3. Fourth-grade teachers teach listening more hours than other teachers;
4. Teachers do not plan, evaluate, or group for listening instruction as they do for other subjects;
5. Iowa teachers indicated they teach listening more than the teachers in Van Wingerden's study, but also lacked college training in methods and content of listening, as did the teachers in Van Wingerden's study;
6. More teachers in the present study said they had pupil textbooks available than the teachers from the state of Washington, but both had limited teaching aids in general.

Assuming the sample selected for this study is representative of the population of Polk County, Iowa it can be

concluded that listening instruction is being given less emphasis in a planned manner by most intermediate grade teachers than the other communication skills, and that listening instruction in the state of Iowa is quite similar to that performed in the state of Washington in 1965.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

If indeed, less emphasis is being given to a direct, planned approach to listening, and if one concludes listening is important and can be taught, one must decide what can be done about the problem.

Teachers and administrators need to be made aware of the problem and to be educated in the skills involved. This could be accomplished through college courses or in-service workshops. Teaching aids such as pupil textbooks, records, or professional texts for teachers with plans spelled out in detail need to be readily available.

An evaluation program should be set up. It is quite possible the Polk County Board of Education could buy a formal listening test such as STEP to be loaned to schools in Polk County in the same manner Iowa Basic Skills Tests are provided.

Other studies to be considered for investigation might include the following concerns:

1. A study to determine the amount of emphasis given to

listening instruction in the primary grades in Polk County, or the amount of emphasis given in other geographical areas other than Polk County or the four counties in the state of Washington;

2. A follow-up study in the same four counties in Washington to determine whether or not listening instruction has increased in quality and quantity since 1965;
3. A follow-up study of the teachers in Polk County in the near future to determine whether or not listening instruction increases in quantity or quality;
4. A collection of ideas already developed by various people to teach listening and then determine the skill the material would be used to teach, for the many teachers who would like to teach listening in a direct manner, but find it hard to obtain ideas;
5. A follow-up study on the people who enrolled in Speech 129 at Drake University in the summer of 1968 for a one hour workshop on listening to learn whether or not students enrolled were able to make use of ideas presented by the instructor, Dr. Nichols, in their own classrooms or other occupations.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE ON DIRECT PLANNED
LISTENING INSTRUCTION

1. What grade are you teaching this year? _____
2. What is the approximate enrollment of your class? _____
3. Which one of these three types of classrooms is yours?
Self-contained Departmentalized Semi-departmentalized
(Underline the type which is yours.)

The following questions are concerned with the teaching of listening skills. For the purposes of this survey "listening" is defined as the ability to comprehend what is heard, not merely the ability to hear or pay attention. It will be assumed that the five major factors in listening ability are the skills of:

- (1) Distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant ideas when listening.
- (2) Making full use of contextual clues when listening.
- (3) Making logical inferences from what is listened to.
- (4) Discovering the central ideas when listening, and
- (5) Following without loss a fairly complex thought unit when listening.

It will help if you keep this definition in mind whenever the term "listening" is used in the following questions.

4. Approximately what percentage of the total time you spend teaching listening do you teach it by:

Direct, planned instruction..... %
(This method would consist of those lessons in which you select a specific listening skill (such as one of those listed above), set aside a period of time to teach it, plan how you are going to present the lesson, carry out the teaching, and measure the pupils' growth toward attaining the skill.)

As a part of reading instruction..... %
(This method would consist of those times when, during regular reading instruction, you make an effort to take a few minutes to teach the pupils a specific listening skill which is closely related to the reading skills being taught at that time.)

Incidental instruction..... %
(This method would consist of the unplanned teaching of listening that occurs incidentally at any time during the day.)

Total Listening Instruction 100%

5. Approximately how often do you teach the following skills:

	By direct, planned instruction					As a part of reading instruction					By incidental instruction							
	Once every					Once every					Once every							
	day	week	two weeks	month	two months	year	day	week	two weeks	month	two months	year	day	week	two weeks	month	two months	year
a. Distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant ideas when listening ...																		
b. Discovering the central idea when listening																		
c. Making full use of contextual clues when listening ...																		
d. Making logical inferences from what is listened to ...																		
e. Following without loss a fairly complex thought unit when listening ...																		

NOTE You may want to check a skill under all three methods or, if you do not teach a particular skill, you may leave all three methods blank.

6. How many hours would you say you spend per MONTH teaching listening skills? (Assume a total of 110 teaching hours per month, or twenty, $5\frac{1}{2}$ -hour days.)
Hours per MONTH (by all methods) _____
7. Which of the communication skills do you emphasize most in your teaching? (Mark the one you emphasize most (1), next most (2), etc.)

Reading
Writing
Speaking
Listening.....

Always Often Seldom Never
A O S N

8. Do you teach listening as a separate subject during a specific time period?

Do you make written plans for lessons specifically designed to teach listening skills?

Do you give children grades in listening as you do in other subjects?

Do you divide your class for instruction into listening groups as many teachers divide their class into reading groups?

9. Will your children probably be given a formal hearing test this year?

	_____	Yes	_____	No
Listening test.....	_____	Yes	_____	No
Vision test.....	_____	Yes	_____	No
Reading test.....	_____	Yes	_____	No
Arithmetic test.....	_____	Yes	_____	No

10. Have you taken a college course in teaching of listening? Yes _____ No _____

11. Does your district provide:

- A curriculum guide which offers substantial suggestions for teaching listening? Yes _____ No _____
- Pupil textbooks which contain materials designed to teach specific listening skills? ... Yes _____ No _____
- In-service workshops or courses in methods of teaching listening? Yes _____ No _____
- Supervisory personnel, other than the principal, who help teachers with listening instruction? _____ Yes _____ No _____

GENERAL COMMENTS

Please use the back of this page if you feel that any of your reactions on this questionnaire need clarification or if you wish to make additional comments.

821 Belmont Dr.
Ankeny, Iowa
December 14, 1968

Dear Colleague,

Did you know that elementary school children spend approximately sixty per cent of their time in school learning by listening? James I. Brown reports evidence that not until about the seventh grade does reading become a more efficient medium than listening for learning.

In view of the fact that listening skills can be taught, and are of upmost importance, I would like to undertake a study of the teaching of listening skills in grades 4, 5, and 6. Your opinion, along with those of several other intermediate grade teachers in this locality, is vital to the study. Your answers on the enclosed questionnaire will result in the development of better ways of helping teachers like yourself to become more skillful teachers of listening.

It should not take much time to complete the questionnaire. Please do not sign your name. There is a code number on your questionnaire which will be used only if it is necessary to identify those who do not respond so that I may contact them a second time.

Will you fill it out sometime during the next day or two? It would be greatly appreciated. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. I will be happy to forward to you an abstract of the study at your request.

Sincerely yours,

Jo Ann DeMoss

821 Belmont Dr.
Ankeny, Iowa
January 13, 1969

Dear Colleague,

Do you remember that questionnaire you received a week before Christmas regarding the teaching of listening?

Over half of the teachers in the sample have returned them so far and that is certainly a fine response considering how busy teachers are. But YOUR response is very important to the study because it will be used to represent the opinion of seven intermediate grade teachers in the area.

Will you have time to return the questionnaire today? Is there a possibility you might find time to fill it out:

- _____ just before leaving the building this afternoon?
- _____ as you ride home in the car pool?
- _____ right after dismissal when you don't feel like regular schoolwork?
- _____ during the coffee break?
- _____ during the minute or two you have after lunch?

I would greatly appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Jo Ann DeMoss

821 Belmont Dr.
Ankeny, Iowa
January 20, 1969

Dear Colleague,

Approximately 70 per cent of the intermediate teachers receiving the listening questionnaire have returned them and this is certainly a fine response. But as I explained in an earlier letter, YOUR response is very important because it will be used to represent the opinion of several intermediate grade teachers in the area.

I am sending a second questionnaire and stamped, self-addressed envelope in the event the original one has been lost during the hectic days of Christmas vacation.

I would greatly appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Jo Ann DeMoss